

# RASPUTIN—DEVIL OR SAINT

by The Princess Radziwill

Lwoff characterized Rasputin as "this strange personality who had been taken under the special protection of the administration, who was considered too sacred to be subjected to the criticism of the press, and who had been put upon such a pedestal that no one was allowed to touch or even to approach him."

**The Danger Which Rasputin Personified in Russian Society at Large Did Not Proceed From His Own Personality, but From the Character of the Men Who Surrounded Him and Who Made Him Their Tool in Their Attempt to Force Russia Into the Arms of Germany**

**The Associates of the "Prophet" Were Working to Fatten Their Own Purses, to Foment Palace Intrigue, to Cripple the Activities of the Duma and to Give the Impression That All These Machinations, Destined to Hinder the Army, Were Known to the Emperor and the Empress**

## CHAPTER VII (Continued)

TWO years later, in 1914, a few weeks before the breaking out of the present war, another deputy, this time a clergyman, Father Filonenko, spoke about Rasputin in the Duma, and did so in the following strong terms:

"As a faithful and devoted son of our Holy Orthodox Church, I consider it my painful duty to mention once more what has already been discussed here by so many orators better than myself, and to recur to a subject which is at present talked of at the corner of every street, in every town and in every village, no matter how distant and how far from any civilized center in our vast Empire. We find ourselves compelled to look upon this unexplainable influence of a common adventurer, belonging to the worst type of those sectarians whom until now we have known by the name of Khlysts, and despised accordingly. We are obliged to reckon with this influence of a man upon whom all the sane elements in our society look with contempt."

### Wherein the Menace of Rasputin Lay

On that same day another deputy belonging to the group of Ultra-Conservatives, Prince Mansyreff, also spoke about Rasputin, with perhaps even more energy than any one had ever done before in the Duma. Said the Prince:

"The adventure of Illiodore ended in ridicule, but we have now in his place another adventurer, with the personality of whom are connected the most nefarious and disgusting rumors, the most unnatural and contemptible crimes. It is useless to mention his name; every one knows who he is, and of whom I am talking. He has been let loose on our society to acquire some influence over it by men even more shameless than he is himself; one has used him to terrorize all those who have dared to express their opinions against the currents which prevail at present in our administrative circles. This adventurer, whenever he travels and whenever he arrives in St. Petersburg, is met at the railway station by the highest dignitaries of the church; before him pray, as they would do to God, unfortunate hysterical ladies of the highest social circles. This individual, who only seeks the satisfaction of the lowest instinct of a low nature, has introduced himself into the very heart of our country and of our society, and we find and feel everywhere his disgusting and filthy influence."

A few days after this memorable sitting of the Duma the Government issued instructions to the press never to mention Rasputin's name or to speak of any subject connected with him in the newspapers. As soon as this became known the Octobrists put down on the order of the day in the Duma an interpellation on the matter, and Mr. Goutschkoff in moving it exclaimed:



The Kazan Cathedral, St. Petersburg, the church of the Romanoffs, to which Rasputin had free access, despite the occasional objections of many of the highest Church dignitaries.

"Dark and dangerous days have arrived, and the conscience of the Russian nation has been deeply moved by the events of the last few months, and is protesting against the appearance amongst us of symptoms proving that we are returning to the darkest periods of the middle ages. It has cried out that things are going wrong in our State, and that danger threatens our most holy national ideals."

Prince Lwoff seconded the motion, and asked the Government to explain who was this "strange personality who had been taken under the special protection of the administration, who was considered as too sacred to be subjected to the criticism of the press, and who had been put upon such a pedestal that no one was allowed to touch or even to approach him."

I would not have quoted these speeches but for the fact that they all bore on the same point, the one that I have tried to make clear to the mind of my readers. This point is that the danger which Rasputin undoubtedly personified in Russian society at large did not proceed from his own personality, but from the character of the men who surrounded him, who had made out of him their tool and who were trying through him to rule Russia and to push it into the arms of Germany. There is no doubt that Germany had been carefully following all the phases of the drama which

culminated in the assassination of the "Prophet" and had been helping by her subsidies the underhand and mysterious work of men like Mr. Manussewitsch Maniuloff and his satellites, and like Mr. Sturmer. Sturmer believed quite earnestly that he would secure immortality for his name and for his work if he contrived to conclude a peace which every one knew that Russia required, but which no one except himself and the adventurers to whom he had owed his elevation thought of making except in concert with Russia's allies, and only after Germany had been compelled to accept the conditions of her adversaries.

The whole Rasputin affair was nothing but a German intrigue which aimed at discrediting the dynasty and perhaps even at overthrowing the sovereign from his throne.

Thanks to the infernal cunning of the people who were its leaders, the imperial circle and even some of the imperial family were represented as being entirely under the "Prophet's" influence. And thanks to the solitary existence which the Emperor and Empress were leading, and to the small number of people who were allowed to see them, these rumors gained ground, for the simple reason that there existed no one capable of contradicting them or of pointing out their absurdity. Calumnies as stupid as they were

degrading to the authors of them were set in circulation, and the revolutionary movement which Germany had been fomenting grew stronger and stronger every day, until it reached the lower classes. These classes by a kind of miracle were also kept very well informed as to everything that was connected with Rasputin or with the subterranean work performed by his party, a work which tended to only make the House of Romanoff unpopular, and to represent it as incapable of taking to heart the interest of the country over which it reigned.

### The Character of Rasputin's Associates

If we consider who were the people at the side of the "Prophet," and who inspired all his actions as well as his utterances, we find police agents, adventurers who had been sometimes in prison and sometimes in exile; functionaries eager to obtain some fat sinecure in which they might do nothing and earn a great deal; stock exchange speculators of doubtful morality and still more doubtful honesty; women of low character and army purveyors, mixed up with an innumerable number of spies. Most of these last were in the German service and were working for all that they were worth to bring about some palace conspiracy or some popular movement capable of removing from his throne a Tzar whose honesty and straightforwardness of character precluded the possibility of Russia betraying the trust which her Allies had put in her.

Yet this was precisely what these people wanted, and what they had made up their minds to force through, thanks to the indignation which the various stories which were being repeated every day concerning Rasputin and the favor which he enjoyed was arousing all over Russia. The Emperor, of course, knew nothing of all this; the Empress even less. There was no one to tell them the truth, and they would have been more surprised than any one else had they suspected the ocean of lies which had been told concerning themselves, and concerning the kindness with which they had treated a man whom they considered as being half saint and half mad, but of whom they had never thought in their wildest dreams of making their chief advisor.

In this extraordinary history there is also another point which must be noticed. When the first deceptions produced by the disasters of the beginning of the campaign had thrown public opinion into a state of mind which was bordering well-nigh upon despair, and before it had had time to recover from the shock of the fall of Warsaw and the line of fortresses upon which they had relied to protect the western frontier, people had begun to seek for the cause of the great disillusionment they had been called upon to experience. One had very quickly discovered, partly through the revelations that had been made in the Duma, that the real reason for all the sad things which had happened lay in the systematic plundering of the public exchequer, that had been going on for such a long time and which even the experiences of the Japanese war had not cured. When the fierce battle against Germany began in grim earnest the first thought of the Emperor had been to try to put an end to these deceptions that had compromised the prestige and the good name of Russia abroad as well as at home. Great severity was shown to the many adventurers who had enriched themselves at the expense of the nation. When it had come to the fabrication of the necessary ammunition required by the army, then the help of Russia's Allies—England and France—had been sought. Thanks to the efforts of these two Powers, something like order was re-established in the vast machine of the War Office.

The fabrication of shells of a size that could not fit any gun was stopped. The army at the front got clothes and food of which it had been in want at the beginning of the campaign. Ammunition was dispatched where it was required, and not in the contrary direction as often had been the case before. The Allies helped Russia to the best of their ability, and Russia, at least the sane and honest part of Russian society, felt grateful to them for their co-operation in the work of their common defense against a foe which it had become necessary to defeat so thoroughly that civilization could no longer be endangered by its existence and activity.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

# RAINBOW'S END

By REX BEACH

Author of "The Spoilers," "The Barrier," "Heart of the Sunset"

A novel of love, hidden treasure and rebellion in beautiful, mysterious Cuba during the exciting days of the revolt against Spain.

## CHAPTER VIII (Continued)

ESTEBAN broke out excitedly, he could not discuss Pancho Cueto without losing control of himself. "Would you permit that traitor to fatten upon the profits of our plantations? He thinks he is safe; he is preparing for a rich crop at high prices, but he shall never reap a dollar from Varona land as long as I live. I shall ruin him, as he ruined us."

Rosa shook her dark head sadly. "And we are indeed ruined. Think of our beautiful house; all our beautiful things, too! We used to consider ourselves poor, but—how little we knew of real poverty. There are so many things I want. Have we nothing left?"

### Prepared for the Worst

"I thought it best to buy those rifles," the brother murmured, dropping his eyes. "It was one chance in a million."

"No doubt it was. It seems those Spaniards will sell their souls."

"Exactly. We can dig food from the earth and pluck it from the trees, but good Mausers don't grow on every bush. Besides, of what use would money be to us when we have no place to spend it?"

"True! After a moment Rosa mused aloud: "I wonder if Cueto found the treasure? If only we had that—"

"He didn't find it," Esteban declared. "It's—hesitated—"I think I know why he didn't."

"Yes?"

"I think I know where it is."

"Esteban!" Rosa stared, round-eyed, at her brother.

"Oh, I mean it. I've been thinking so ever since—"

"Where is it?" breathlessly inquired the girl.

After a furtive look over his shoulder Esteban whispered, "In the well."

"You're joking?"

"No, not think for yourself. It was old Sebastian who dug that well—"

"Yes."

"And he alone shared father's confidence. That sunken garden was all Sebastian's work; he spent all his time there, although he was a big, strong man and capable of any task. No one else was allowed to tend it. Why! I'll tell you. They feared to let any one else draw the water. Isabel searched for years if that treasure had been above ground, her sharp nose would have sniffed it out, and now Cueto has moved the very earth."

### THE STORY THUS FAR

JOHNNIE O'REILLY, more commonly known as THE O'REILLY, has fallen in love with ROSA VARONA, one of the orphans of DON ESTEBAN VARONA, a wealthy slave owner and sugar planter of Cuba. Don Esteban had hoarded a vast fortune in precious stones, old Spanish coins and modern currency in a secret chamber at the bottom of a well. In building this well he was assisted by SEBASTIAN, a faithful slave, the only other person to share the secret.

When Don Esteban's first wife died he became the target for many match-makers, who knew vaguely of his hidden fortune. DONA ISABEL succeeded in becoming the second wife and immediately set about intriguing to learn of the fortune. Hoping to get information from Sebastian, she succeeded in having his daughter, EVANGELINA, sold. The slave, infuriated, murders his master and several others before he is shot. Thus in a few minutes the only two persons who know the whereabouts of the fortune are killed.

Isabel tries vainly to get information from PANCHO CUETO, the manager of the plantations. Instead, he threatens to claim the estate as his because Don Esteban left no deeds to the property. That night Isabel falls into the well and is drowned. She is rescued by ESTEBAN, Rosa's brother and a spy for Colonel Lopez, the leader of the Cuban insurrectionists. Pancho Cueto finds a letter with information which Esteban had dropped and turns it over to the authorities. Rosa and Esteban then escape up the valley to the hut of Evangelina, their old nurse.

O'Reilly, back in New York at the office of the firm which he represented in Cuba, anxiously awaits information from his sweetheart. His many letters do not bring a reply until months later, when Rosa tells him of the misfortunes that have befallen since he left Cuba. O'Reilly determines to rescue his beloved, and for that purpose calls upon Mr. Enriquez, head of the Cuban junta in New York, who helps him to return to the tropic island. There O'Reilly, in common with other Americans, is suspected, and he attempts to fool his hotelkeeper by stating that he came to Cuba for his rheumatism. After conferring with a Dr. Alvarado, O'Reilly moves on to Puerto Principe, nearer the scene of action, where he meets Leslie Branch, an American consumptive, trying to get cured or killed.

In the meantime, Esteban has been harassing Pancho Cueto by burning his sugar fields. The latter goes to Colonel Cobo, in charge of the Spanish troops, with the proposition that in return for exterminating Esteban and his guerrillas the colonel can have Rosa. Rosa and her brother are guessing at the possibility of O'Reilly having received her letter.

Rosa sat back, disappointed. "So that's your theory?"

"It's more than a theory," the boy insisted. "Look at this!" From the pocket of his cotton trousers he produced an odd-looking coin, which he placed in Rosa's hand.

"Why, it's gold! It's a Spanish doubloon," she said. "It's the first one I ever saw. Where did you find it?"

### Spanish Money

"You'll think I'm crazy when I tell you—sometimes I think so myself. I found it in Isabel's hand when I took her from the well."

Rosa was stricken speechless.

"She clutched it tightly," Esteban hurried on, "but as I made the rope fast her hand relaxed and I saw it in the lantern-light."

"It was as if—well, as if she gave it to me. I was too badly frightened to think much about it, as you may imagine. It was a horrible place, all slime and foul water; the rocks were slippery. But that coin was in her fingers."

Rosa managed to say: "Impossible! Then she must have had it when she fell."

"No, no! I saw her hands upstretched, her fingers open in the moonlight."

"It's uncanny. Perhaps—"

"Yes. Perhaps some unseen hand led her to the place so that we should at least come into our own. Who knows? I didn't bother my head about the matter at first, what with our flight and all, but now I reason that there must be other coins where this one came from. There's no doubt that father hid his money. He turned his slaves into gold, he bought jewels, precious metal, anything he could hide. Well, perhaps there were old coins in the lot. The water in the well is shallow; Isabel must have groped this piece from the bottom. Some day I shall explore the hole and—we shall see."

Rosa flung her arms rapturously about her brother's neck and kissed him. "Wouldn't it be glorious?" She cried. "Wouldn't it be wonderful, to be rich, and to want for nothing; to have fine clothes and good things to eat once more? Good things to eat!" Her lip quivered. "Oh—I'm so hungry."

### Poor little girl!

"Wait until O'Reilly hears about this," Rosa was all excitement once more. "He'll be glad he came and got me, if he does come."

Esteban caressed her. "He'll come, never fear. You remember he warned me to be careful? Well I—I blame myself

for bringing you to this. For myself, of course, I don't mind, but for you this life must be terrible. I know it. Every time I leave you my heart is in my throat for fear of what may happen in my absence—and yet I can't always be at your side."

"There! You acknowledge that I handicap you. Except for me you would be making a glorious name for yourself."

"Nothing of the sort. More probably I'd be getting myself killed. No! It's better this way. We must be brave and patient and—think of what is waiting for us at the bottom of that well."

### Guerrilla Warfare

It was indeed a great piece of luck which had enabled Esteban Varona to buy a half-dozen Mausers from a Spanish soldier. Through Asensio's acquaintance he had profited by the dishonesty of an enemy, and, although it had taken all his money to effect the purchase, Esteban considered the sacrifice well worth while. The fire of patriotism burned fiercely in him, as did his hatred of Pancho Cueto, and the four trusty negroes to whom he had given rifles made, with Asensio and himself, an armed party large enough to be reckoned with. These blacks were excitable fellows, and wretched marksmen, but, on the other hand, each and every one had been raised with a machete at his hip and knew how to use it. After a few preliminary forays under Esteban's leadership they had absorbed a bit of discipline and were beginning to feel a military ardor.

In the Cuban field forces there were many negroes, and many of their fellow patriots fought better, or endured the hardships of guerrilla warfare more cheerfully, than they. General Antonio Maceo was of mixed blood, and yet his leadership was characterized not only by rare judgment and ability, but also by an exalted abandonment of personal bravery. His several brothers rendered Cuba services scarcely less distinguished, and they were but of a few of many dark-skinned heroes. This struggle for independence was no patrician's war; the best stock of the island fought side by side with field hands.

At dawn of the morning following his talk with Rosa, when the members of his command assembled, Esteban was up and ready. He had made his preparations to destroy Pancho Cueto's fields, and since the road over the hills to La Joya was long he had summoned them early.

"Be careful!" Rosa implored him. "I shall die of suspense."

### The Modest Home

"It is for you to be careful," he laughed. "Keep a good watch, and conceal yourself at the first alarm. However, I think we have taught these bandits a lesson. As for Cueto, he would run to the jungle if he saw us. He has the heart of a



"It's more than a theory," Esteban insisted. "Look at this, Rosa!" and he produced an odd-looking coin.

mouse." He kissed his sister affectionately and then rode off at the head of his tattered band.

Rosa waved him a last farewell as he disappeared into the woods, then to occupy herself, she helped Evangelina with what little housework there was to do, later going with her to the garden patch where the viandas grew.

Evangelina's early devotion to her mistress had not diminished with time; if anything, it had deepened. When emancipation came she would have returned to the service of her beloved twins had it not been for Dona Isabel's refusal to accept her. As it was, she and Asensio had married, and by means of Rosa's surreptitious help they had managed to buy this little piece of land. Rosa had practiced self-denial to make the purchase possible, and her self-sacrifice had borne fruit; that act of childish beneficence had created a refuge for Esteban and herself and had ripened the negro woman's affection into idolatry.

Evangelina's joy at having the girl to herself, where she could daily see her, touch her, serve her, was tempered only by the knowledge of Rosa's unhappiness.

She scolded and tyrannized, she mothered and adored the girl to her heart's content; she watched over her like a hawk; she deemed no labor in her service too exacting. It would have gone ill with any one who offered harm to Rosa, for Evangelina was strong and capable; she had the arms and the hands of a man, and she possessed the smoldering black temper of Sebastian, her father.

Even in peaceful times few people came to this clearing in the woods, far from the main-traveled roads of the Yumuri, and the day, as usual, passed uneventfully. Evangelina worked, with one eye upon her Rosa, the other watchfully alert for danger. When evening came she prepared their scanty meal, upbraiding Rosa, meanwhile, for her attempts to assist her. Then they sat for an hour or two on the bench outside the door talking about Juan O'Reilly and the probable hour of his coming.

### The Night Watch

There were no candles in Asensio's house now, and had there been, neither woman would have dared light one. To hunted creatures darkness is a friend; danger stalks under the sun.

When Rosa fretted about her brother, the negroes reassured her. "Don't be frightened, little dove; he has the makings of a great soldier. It's a good thing for the Spaniards that he isn't general. Cuba would be free in no time."

"He's so reckless."

"Oh, he knows what he's doing. Besides, Asensio wouldn't let him be hurt. I took pains to tell him that if ever he permitted Esteban to suffer so much as a scratch I would disembowel him with his own machete. He knows me. Now, then, it is growing cool and the night air carries fever. Creep into your bed and dream about that handsome lover of yours."

"No, I'll keep watch with you."

Evangelina was indignant. "Go!" she stormed. "What will happen in these two weeks if you don't sleep? Do you think the American will want to marry an old woman with wrinkles? He may be here tomorrow—yes, I have a certain feeling about it."

Rosa obeyed, although reluctantly. "I'll sleep for a while," she murmured. "Then I'll come out and take my duty."

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)